8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

tures, which were somewhat hardened by constant exposure to the weather. Traders thought the skin color of the Blackfeet was rather swarthy, but not unlike that of Europeans from the south of France or Spain. Already there must have been some mixed-blood children among the Blackfoot tribes, for the men were liberal in offering their wives to the traders when they visited the forts, and were satisfied with "a mere trifle" in payment for this service.[39]

Blackfoot men generally wore their hair loose around their necks, with a long, narrow lock falling over the bridge of the nose and cut square at the lower end. Young dandies painted their faces in stripes, circles, dots, and other designs in several colors. After they married and settled down, men were content to use a single color of face paint. Red was the preferred color, but the warriors also employed yellow ochre and a glossy lead color obtained from west of the Rockies.

Men did not wear breechclouts. However, their long skin leggings, which were tied to the belt, may have crossed in front, affording concealment of the privates while leaving the buttocks bare. Skin moccasins, which were lined with buffalo hair in winter, and a buffalo robe completed the man's everyday costume. On dress occasions men wore skin shirts trimmed with locks of their enemies' hair and cut skin fringes, and decorated with porcupine quill embroidery. Some men wore feathers in their hair and necklaces of grizzly bear claws.

Women wore their hair long and loose. Their principal garment was a sleeveless, skin dress in the form of a slip. Its length fell to the wearer's ankles. This slip was supported by straps over the shoulders. Probably women wore separate skin sleeves in cold weather, held up by skin cords tied at the back of the neck. Cut fringes and porcupine quillwork decorated these dresses. Women's ornaments included bracelets of deer or elk teeth, necklaces of sweet-smelling roots, and finger rings and pendants of metal bells or thimbles obtained from the traders.

In spite of the traders' efforts to induce the Indians to purchase

[39] *Ibid.*, 347-49; Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, II, 524-26, 660.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

595 or more wives. Probably more than half of the men had at least two. In these polygamous households the husband's favorite, his "sits-beside-me-wife," accompanied him to feasts and ceremonies and supervised the work of the other women in her husband's home. Cautious men tried to minimize the dangers of jealousy and friction at home by marrying sisters. A husband of an eldest sister could expect the younger ones to be offered to him as they reached marriageable age, although he did not have to accept them. Double-Victory-Calf-Robe had two elder sisters, both of them married to Iron Horn. One day her father said to her, "My son-in-law, Iron Horn, is very kind and good to us. You had better marry him and be with your sisters." Her family outfitted a travois, helped her mount the travois horse, and she rode over to Iron Horn's lodge. He accepted her as his third wife and gave horses to her father.

593 Men were the undisputed lords of their households. They expected their wives to wait upon them hand and foot, to bring them food when they wanted it, to light their pipes and remove their moccasins. Some men beat their wives unmercifully with
586 their riding whips. If a wife found her husband's cruelty unbearable, her elder brother would take her back to her family. Any man who tired of his wife could send her back to her family. In either case the wife took her property with her and the marriage was dissolved.

● 837 An errant husband could bestow his favors where he wished, but an unfaithful wife, if found out, was in for real trouble. Even
627 though her husband might forgive her, he knew he could not
684 retain the respect of other men unless he took revenge upon her lover, either by killing him or taking his horses, weapons, and other valuables. More often the husband wreaked his vengeance upon his wife. If he was a member of a men's society, his fellow members helped him to shame her. They dragged her from his lodge out on to the plains at night and attacked her. Then they or her jealous husband cut off the end of her nose to mark her for the rest of her life as an unfaithful wife. In 1833, Maximilian observed that women with clipped noses were common in the

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554 556 frequently . . . they [the young men] are great drones, lounging in the village, participating neither in the war nor the chase. . . ."[47] Obviously, these "drones" trusted to their fathers' wealth to bring them positions of re- [157] spect—and this trust was not misplaced. Bravery and war deeds remained [622] an asset to leadership, but among the Blackfoot, "great deeds in social and ceremonial life would alone elevate one to the status of headman."[48]

556 555 Blackfoot society offered considerable opportunity for vertical mobility. Disease, accidents of climate, misfortunes of gambling might reduce and, at times, even wipe out large herds, but the mere fact that great numbers of horses could be accumulated and held for a considerable period led to certain advantage. Manipulation through purchase, give-aways, and other forms of ostentatious display in no way destroyed this advantage. Shrewdly exercised, they built up great prestige and reliable support.[49]

Rivalry and Violence

578 182 621 Cooperative mechanisms, emphasizing interpersonal responsibilities both within the family and within the larger social group (band and men's societies) counteracted to some degree the competitive trends, but these trends continued nevertheless to dominate Blackfoot life. Rivalry for recognition and power was so keen that it "often led to assassination and 621 other dark deeds."[50] As early as 1808, Alexander Henry notes with consider- 578 able feeling the difficulties of the traders in dealing with the Blackfoot, but 181 he leaves no doubt that within the tribes, Blackfoot behavior was equally [834] unpredictable and destructive to peaceful relations. Regarding the Piegan, he wrote:

[837] They have frequent quarrels which may end in bloodshed or death; for though they are lavish in offering their women to the whites. . .they are exceedingly jealous among themselves. These quarrels, however, seldom last long, nor do they affect the whole tribe; the woman being killed, reconciliation is immediate and all are friends again.[51]

Other Blackfoot tribes were certainly no better:

The Cold Band are notoriously a set of audacious villains. The Blood are still worse, always inclined to mischief and murder.[52]

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[47] Bradley, *Characteristics*, p. 272. Bradley commenced writing down his impressions in 1871 when he was stationed at frontier army posts, most particularly Fort Benton and Fort Shaw, and continued to do so until his death in 1877. (*Ibid.*, p. 7.)

[48] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 23. It is possible that this was a development of the late buffalo period.

[49] *Idem.*

[50] *Idem.*

[51] Alexander Henry and David Thompson, *Journals*, Vol. 2, p. 722. Cf. also Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[52] Henry and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

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181 Two records from Henry's Journal illustrate Blackfoot violence and 579 aggressiveness:

[684] They (Blood) informed us of a quarrel between Painted Feathers band and the Cold band caused by a woman who had been debauched by the latter. . .four of the [628] party were wounded, and the woman shot in the leg.[62]

[682] He [a Blackfoot] was a notorious scoundrel, who had murdered three of his own countrymen.[63]

[684] And some twenty years later, Maximilian learns from an Indian whom [837] he meets:

. . .that an Indian had run away with his sister, the wife of a third person, and they had ridden out to look for him in order to shoot him.[64]

And in another passage, he states:

[682] He (White Buffalo) had lately shot his sister, because she kept up an intercourse with a man against whom he had advised her. A chief of the Blackfeet with whom he had a quarrel shot him through the thigh; he, however, did not lose his presence of mind, and killed his enemy, notwithstanding his wound.[65]

578 The remaining cases, taken from winter counts and recent anthropo-
157 logical field notes, deal specifically with the subjects of this paper, "the
682 vicious . . . and turbulent" Blood:

South of the Missouri, the Blood fought among themselves. . . .[66]

In the summer the Blood camped at Yellow Mountains and fought among themselves. Calf Shirt killed some of his own men.[67]

[628] Two Blood chiefs who had trouble with one another, killed each other, Hind Bull and Fish Child.[68]

Shot Bull Back Fat, a Blood, killed another Blood, Eagle Tail Feather Chief.[69]

[621] Big Snake was the Chief of Many-Children Band. He had many wives and children and the strong men in his band were envious of him. Mad Wolf tried to kill him.

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[62] Henry and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 572.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 543.
[64] Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 268.
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 272.
[66] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 46. From Elk Horn's winter count, some time around the year 1855.
[67] *Ibid.*, p. 49. From Big Brave's winter count, presumably a few years later.
[68] From the winter count of Percy Creighton, for the year 1859.
[69] *Ibid.*, for the year 1868.

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425 Easy access to good land is no longer possible, and the best of it has been allotted. A young and ambitious Blood must either turn again to wages, as indeed the sons of rich farmers have done, or if he is not content with the marginal land still available, he must wheedle an idle farm from a more [426] fortunate if less industrious tribesman. He may get it as a loan or on a rental [427] basis, but he is never certain how long he will be permitted to crop it. The more successful he is, the more eager the renter will be to reclaim his land [578] and try his hand at it again. Violent conflict and familial hostility frequently result.

556 CHANGING PRESTIGE FACTOR.—Distinctions between rich and poor are 184 still drawn, and frequently these obscure expected behavior. The rich daughter-in-law is served; the poor one does the work. The poor son-in-law [606] is disparaged. Even the impoverished herder or unsuccessful farmer, in [581] memory of a better day, will storm when his daughter marries a poor orphan. A poor sister-in-law said of her rich one, "She always makes me [607] work for her at her house, but she never does anything when she visits me." A poor young wife who may make a simple and justified request will be sarcastically told, "Go home, you *minipoka*." The real "favorite" may exploit his childhood privilege in the face of little criticism even after he has reached adulthood.

593 The beautiful and discontented wife of a poor man may brazenly flaunt 937 her affair with her rich lover, but the unhappy wife of a rich man will find 577 some more dignified way of showing her dissatisfaction. When her husband philanders, she may refuse to cook his food; she may roll up in her own 556 blanket and deny him his conjugal rights; she may leave him, or she may 184 entertain his mistress, ply her with fine gifts, and receive the approbation of society "because she shows no jealousy."

[575] A chief or member of the Horn Society is also roundly applauded when he shows no jealousy; but the poor husband who sits by and silently witnesses the drunken love-making of his wife and her rich lover receives no [593] respect for his restraint. A spoiled and wealthy woman may forbid her [584] "favorite" the house; she may take his horses and disinherit him if she disapproves of his marriage. A woman less economically secure, even if she is known as "manly-hearted," may uphold the authority of her "favorite" at all cost, as the one sure means of maintaining family prestige.

557 The advantages of a good marriage are quickly recognized. A wealthy Pointed Plume will say, "All women chase a rich man." A poor William Curtis will say, "A man should marry his daughter to someone who can take care of her."

178 But the changing status of various groups within Blood society is strik- 581 ingly revealed by an analysis of marriage trends. Thirty years ago marriages still followed the earlier pattern. The wealthy cattle men continued

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Seizers.[158] Excepting for the Horns, who present a special problem, membership falls off noticeably in the upper grades. This may well have been the tendency in the pre-reserve period, for increasing age, limited bundles,[159] and selective memberships[160] were all considerations then. They figure equally prominently in the reserve period; but with the introduction of a money economy divorced from a horse economy, a large sector of the population voluntarily cut itself off from ceremonial purchase. Successful farmers, who had only enough horses for their agricultural needs, were unwilling to jeopardize their profits by paying out valuable animals for old-time "respect." From 1910–1920, the wealthy horse and cattle owners (who at that time also had sufficient cash) were little concerned with this heretical attitude; but their almost unrelieved poverty since 1920 (except for horses) has made them more sensitive to the continued refusal of this group to participate in the traditional way. In 1939, though waning membership was not an issue, the Horn Society exerted tremendous pressure on the richest farmer to join its ranks. His two fine teams and well-rigged buggy, his bolts of cloth and many blankets made an impressive display at the public transfer. But he himself showed little appreciation of the honor accorded him. "Blackmail," he called it, and his complaints both before and after initiation were many and loud.

The Pigeons, the youngest of the graded societies,[161] are having difficulties too, but these are difficulties of membership. Ideally, each group is supposed to sell out after four years, but the present owners have had to hold their bundles for more than seven. The younger men are reluctant to make even the nominal payment of "$5.00 and a couple of blankets," for the questionable advantage of traditional privilege.

A combination of factors has contributed to the exceptional popularity of the Horns: (1) they merged with the Bulls, thus increasing the number of memberships available; (2) only in this society do the wives join with

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[158] These data and those which follow on the Women's Society, Sun Lodge builders, medicine pipes and beaver bundles were collected in the main by Marjorie Lismer and Harry D. Biele. Unfortunately, limited time and the great size of the reserve made extensive checking impossible. They are offered here, not as a completely accurate record, but in the belief that, in a general way, they reflect certain broad social trends.

For comparison, cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, pp. 365-6 and 369. For an early list of Blackfoot societies, see Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 255 ff.

[159] Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 386.

[160] *Idem.*

[161] Wissler has made a point for society rank based on "assumed seniority in historical origin" (*Blackfoot Societies*, p. 368). Such an assumption would be strengthened by the position of the Pigeons who are not listed by Wissler as late as 1910 for the Blood.

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575 their husbands; (3) each prospective buyer has a partner (formerly these
554 were bachelors, often not more than boys, whose families were willing and
[754] able to "see them through"); (4) members of the Horn are the most feared
[837] group among the Blood (those who buy the "painted root"[142] can sorcerize,
[577] but even the lesser members, it is believed, have power "so great that to wish anyone ill or dead is all that is needed for realization"[143]); (5) adultery, a great tension point in the culture, is sanctioned in the Horns (individual sorcery power can only be acquired after the seller has had ceremonial intercourse with the buyer's wife); (6) jealousy is proscribed (self-control for the Blood is difficult at best, but its achievement by members of the Horn brings great social approval); (7) the Horns are now the oldest ranking society. Those who have been through it can go no further, but many can and do rejoin it.

Of the 130 who have been members at some time,

61 have bought in once
33 have bought in twice
22 have bought in three times
11 have bought in four times
1 has bought in six times
2 have bought in eight times.

575 Despite Catholic injunctions against joining the Horns (because of the
424 ceremonially sanctioned adultery), and despite the lack of interest on the
[798] part of those without horses, the demand for Horn bundles seems to be
[837] greater than the supply. While others find no bidders or are falling in value
[435] (the Long Time Pipe which sold for a hundred and for fifty horses at an earlier time, sold for twenty in 1939), the leader's lance of the Horn Society that same year brought fourteen horses and much goods, the approximate cost.[144] Wissler quoting a Piegan's statement made shortly after 1910 writes:

575 Bad-old-man bought into the mosquitoes while he was quite young but after his
424 marriage. This was before the pigeons were started. For this membership he paid
432 a gun and clothing. At the end of four years he sold out and joined the braves at a cost of some blankets and clothing. After three years he sold his membership in the braves and bought into the all-brave-dogs. Now, it happened that he purchased this membership from his own son-in-law and he gave as the purchase price his youngest daughter. After three years he sold his membership in the all-brave-dogs and purchased a place in the front-tails, paying a horse. After four years he sold out and purchased into the raven-bearers for which he paid a horse. The next summer he

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[142] *Ibid.*, p. 413. Wissler calls this prairie-turnip.
[143] *Ibid.*, p. 411.
[144] Harry D. Biele notes that twenty-two horses were promised but that considerably fewer were delivered.

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joined the horns as he was then living with the Blood. For this he paid a horse, a gun, a saddle, and many blankets.[165]

Ordinary memberships in the Horn today bring no less. Many bring considerably more. The society's transfer ceremony was the most spectacular event at the Sun Dance.

Dance Societies[166]

A number of these associations still flourish on the reserve. Their membership problems are not formidable since their purpose is social and their fees nominal, mostly contributions of food at the time of the dance.

The Women's Society[167]

The *Matoki*, as the Women's Society is called, raised their lodge at the Sun Dance and, assisted by six men—four singers and two messengers—climaxed a four-day ceremony by imitating buffalo driven into the park. In 1939, fifteen women participated, all of them well beyond their prime. The leader's pole which, according to Mr. Duvall, cost "twelve horses and an appropriate amount of other property" has not changed hands for forty years, although "like the horns and other societies the members sell, or transfer, to others usually . . . at the same time."[168]

The Sun Lodge

With the exception of three years, the Sun Lodge has been raised annually since 1910, sixteen women vowing it, sometimes two of them jointly:[169]

1 woman vowed the Sun Lodge but did not put it up
10 women put up the Sun Lodge once (one year two jointly)
1 woman put up the Sun Lodge twice
2 women put up the Sun Lodge three times (one, once with a woman who raised it five times)
1 woman put up the Sun Lodge four times
1 woman put up the Sun Lodge five times (four times since 1920 alone and once with one of the women who raised it three times)

The demand for chastity before marriage and fidelity after may have eliminated a goodly number, but one informant felt sure that that was not

[165] Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 426 ff.
[166] *Ibid.*, p. 451 ff.
[167] *Ibid.*, p. 430 ff.
[168] *Ibid.*, pp. 433, 432.
[169] Harry D. Biele, Field Notes. For a full discussion of the Sun Dance and the building of the Sun Lodge, see Wissler, *The Sun Dance of the Blackfoot Indians*, pp. 220-270.

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the only reason for the limited participation: "There are a lot of women on this reserve who could put up a Sun Lodge, but don't want to." While their virtue might be unassailable, she was convinced that they either could not muster enough wealth, or did not care to meet the considerable demands for buying the *natoas* bundle,[170] putting up the lodge and staging a give-away.

The rewards of chastity unsupported by property are limited indeed. In 1939, the Sun Lodge vower only gave two horses away. The transferrer asked by an interested bystander how he "had come out," laughed and answered, "I never did as badly as this time." The crowd, well-aware that there was to be no give-away, showed little interest in the proceedings. When the great moment arrived, the sun pole could barely be raised; most of the men preferred to dance the Owl Dance, that aid to flirtation and liaison. But the conspicuous display at the transfer of Horn Society memberships two days earlier had drawn a large and expectant company.

Bundles[171]

The costs, limited memberships available, and unappealing demands of such a society as the Crazy Dogs were clearly deterrents to participation, but nevertheless an impressive proportion of the adult male population bought into the cheaper (younger) organizations, and for special reasons into the Horns. The ownership of medicine pipes and beaver bundles is much more restricted. Only thirty, or less than one-tenth of the group sampled, bought pipes at all:

25 bought 1 pipe
1 bought 2 pipes
2 bought 3 pipes
2 bought 4 pipes

Only six have bought beaver bundles:[172]

3 bought 1 bundle
3 bought 2 bundles

Of the first group, one had also purchased a medicine pipe; of the second, one had purchased four.

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[170] It is possible to vow the Sun Lodge without buying the *natoas* bundle. Cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, pp. 241, 246.

[171] Many other types than those discussed here were in circulation. For full descriptions, see Wissler, *Blackfoot Bundles*, passim.

[172] Wissler (*Blackfoot Bundles*, p. 169), writes in 1912: "At present beaver bundles are to be found among the divisions except the Blood, among whom they have not been particularly popular for a long time."

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175 another."[187] More leniency was shown to the partner in sin. Maximilian
684 continues, "Often he avenges himself on the paramour, takes away his horse or other valuable property, to which he must submit quietly."[188]
684 Today infidelity, or suspicion of it, are also severely punished. Beatings are frequent; one old lady still carefully conceals her mutilated face behind her shawl; and Big Head, recently released from prison, killed his wife because rumors of her misconduct had reached him during his confinement.[189]

593 Absence from home is perhaps the greatest threat to a man's marital peace.
937 His present fears echo attitudes of the past, grounded in an economy that made more or less long separations between husband and wife inevitable. The small raiding or hunting parties, which might include the husband, left plenty of men available for romance. Today, although life is more sedentary, dwellings are isolated. A few hours in the field, a trip to town, are enough to kindle the flame. But it is the jail sentence, that frequent experience, which most nearly approximates the extended absences of a former time. Legal protection from a surprise return adds to the safety of wifely adventure; it also intensifies the fears of the ever-suspicious husband.

593 Some few women are notoriously jealous of their husbands, but primarily
152 it is the men who exhibit the greatest sexual insecurity. A man who shows
578 no jealousy is considered brave; yet a young mother eager to see her son of six become a good fighter will proudly encourage him when he shakes his
[577] fist in fury at an old medicine man whom he considers his "rival." From
[865] earliest babyhood, a child is exposed to the violent quarrels of his parents. He hears his mother's virtue assailed; he sees his father beat her for misbehavior. Against such a background and such conditioning, traditionally
[181] desirable attitudes are achieved with difficulty. In this society, jealousy has become obsessional; even chiefs find it difficult to act within the prescribed pattern, and serious lapses are not unknown.

593 Few men trust their wives. A seemingly contented husband of twenty
578 years will, at the first sign of anger, hurl accusations of infidelity at his
152 mate. One husband refuses to permit his wife to remove her shawl in her own
831 house for fear she will succumb to the casual advances of some passerby. Another will suspect his wife of indiscretions while he is busy not one hundred yards away; still another will insist that his wife ride a horse at his side
[575] (an unwomanly occupation) so he can keep her within sight. Some will refuse to enter the Horn Society, because they feel unable to suppress their jealousy, as they are expected to do during their term of membership. A man will quickly, and often with little reason, accuse a brother of being his
[572] wife's lover. "You may joke," they say, "with your *taka*'s wife, but if you

[187] Maximilian, *Travels*, p. 253.
[188] *Idem.*
[189] Letter to Harry D. Biele in September, 1939.

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joke with your brother's, it means you are in earnest." The only Blood confined to the insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost. Many a husband, approaching his end, threatens his mate with death, for only when she accompanies him on his final journey can he be sure that in the next world he alone will possess her.

Husbands, who need proof of good behavior and who can afford to pay for it, may insist that their wives "vow the tongues"[150] or put up the Sun Lodge, for only those who are chaste before and faithful after marriage can do so with impunity. Sometimes, however, the pressure may be so great, that a woman must take a chance. Urged by her husband who remained unconvinced concerning her virginity at marriage, Weasel Girl distributed the tongues at the Sun Dance. Her husband's uncle, noting that she failed to mention the names of any men she had rebuffed, suspected her avowal, and threw his piece of meat to a dog at his side. Later that evening, this dog was shot while making off with a chicken. His alertness and caution had saved him, the uncle was certain, from a sure and untimely death. That Weasel Girl, herself, only lived three years longer was further evidence that she had lied.

Suspicion is not always without cause, as it may well have been in this instance. The most casual encounter, the social dances in the dance hall, even the Sun Dance, offer innumerable opportunities for illicit adventures, and these are not missed. Many a husband has found his wife with her lover. But so obsessed are they by their suspicions, that every possibility of adultery immediately becomes a fact.

Informal wife-lending among the Blood is inconceivable whether to a casual friend[151] or a life-long "*taka*." Yet this act which cannot be tolerated in daily living, is ritually sanctioned when the sorcery roots are purchased by members in the Horn Society.[152] At this time, the wife of the buyer deposits her clothes in her husband's lap. Protected by a buffalo robe, she is taken to the tipi of the seller and ceremonially painted. She then "goes

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[150] Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, p. 234 ff.

[151] Henry in his Journal (vol. 2, p. 526) states that the Blackfoot were a "nuisance in offering women." Wissler (*Social Life*, p. 10) observes that he believes these women were captives.

[152] Among the neighboring Cree the opposite situation existed. They practised informal wife exchange. D. G. Mandelbaum (*The Plains Cree*, p. 246) writes: "This relationship reflected considerable honor upon the participants, for only the most stout-hearted men could become intimate companions of their wives' paramours." But in a ceremony called Sitting Up Until Morning (*ibid.*, p. 228) although the "warriors of one society issued invitations to the wives or daughters of the members of other societies!! and "at dawn, the men washed and painted the women's faces,

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on the sacred walk."[183] Returning, she gives the sinister root which she has received from her nocturnal partner to her uneasy husband.

The interval of waiting is among the greatest trials of the Blood. The anxious husband must show no jealousy during the "walk"; he must joke with his fellow members and suffer their teasing without taking offense. So great is this strain that some are unable to bring themselves to the test; others hire a substitute wife, although the added cost may be considerable.

The Blood are not overly engrossed with sorcery, perhaps because black magic may act as a boomerang, perhaps because hostility is quickly and overtly expressed, perhaps because their way of life brought numerous and tangible rewards. But some standard of values is suggested by the fact that the greatest power to hurt others is acquired by submitting to what they believe entails the greatest personal suffering—the possession of one's wife by another. Its institutionalization in the Horn Society in no way relaxes the sexual tensions among the people at large; it merely succeeds in heightening them for the few who want to purchase the most feared power available to the Blood.

Writing on the relations between Blackfoot men and women, Wissler observes, "We found no traces of the conventional modes of registering conquests as among the young men of the Dakota and Village Indians."[184] Victims of a monotonous poverty, these more easterly tribesmen readily transferred a symbol from their glamorous past to the one remaining area of competition, sex. The counting of coups over amorous successes may well have seemed unnecessary, and even ridiculous, to the more exuberant Blood whose daily routines gave them many other ego satisfactions.

MARITAL INSTABILITY.—Psychopathic possessiveness and aggressive behavior, however, offer a poor foundation for a satisfactory or enduring marriage. In 1909, a worried agent, after discussing the difficulties arising from drink, observed, "The morality question is at present a more serious one on this reservation, the transgressors very principally young married people who, after quarrelling separate and insist upon availing themselves of the old tribal right to take other partners."[185] The instability of early marriage can be easily documented. A Dancing Bird, beautiful if undiscriminating, consoled ten "husbands"; a wilful Mary Red Bear boasted

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combed their hair, and gave them a gift. . .no sexual license is permitted during this occasion."

The attitudes and values of the two tribes are nicely revealed in the following incident from a tale: A Blackfoot visiting a Cree makes him a present of a horse. In return, the Cree offers him his wife.

[183] Cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 413 ff. Also Harry D. Biele, Field Notes.

[184] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 9.

[185] 1909, Vol. 43, No. 15, p. 169.

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at least two unions before she settled down with the youngest son of a wealthy chief. 593 837

But even a long interlude of adaptation may end in abandonment. A Bob Double Man still believes in loving and leaving; a Pointed Plume, after an alliance of twenty-two years, again sows his wild oats; a Henry Dennis deserts his wife and seven young children for a younger and handsomer woman; and a Mrs. John White Bull changes partners at will, returning unconcernedly to a cast-off husband when a new one proves unsatisfactory. 581

Many, however, stick it through; but within the frame of a monogamous marriage, they are able to reëstablish the polygamous past with considerable success. Not infrequently a woman, whose husband is safely behind prison bars for drunkenness or cattle stealing or assault, will spend the time of waiting with an "interested" and hospitable relative. Her position in his household is not unlike that of the "second wife" in an earlier day. She may, now as then, give needed domestic aid, but more often she remains a demanding and quarrelsome interloper fighting the "legal" wife for the husband's favor. 593 937 595 178 [578]

When a more stable relationship is sought without disturbing the formal bonds of marriage, a mistress's husband may also be invited into the home as farm worker or cattle hand. He watches his arrogant employer delight his wife with gifts and make love to her in drunken orgies. To him, dignified silence at these spectacles establishes his bravery; to them, he remains a weakling to be ignored and laughed at. 593 837 [577]

Most often, however, separation, either permanent or temporary, is the ready answer to incompatibility. From the standpoint of familial stability, the latter may well be the more devastating. One detailed description of alternating breaks and reunions follows: 586

In the four months that Pointed Plume was living with his "new wife" Laura and her baby daughter, they separated as many times. Twenty years his junior, small, compact, but looking his contemporary, she industriously prepared his meals, jerked the meat, made pemmican, preserved the fruits, and did the family washing. A neighbor said, "Pointed Plume's new wife is a good worker. She likes to please the old man. She does everything for him." But another commented, "They are not getting on very well. Laura's first marriage with Big Shield broke up because she was so jealous; her marriage with Tom Bacon broke up for the same reason. Now after three months she is accusing White Plume of running with other women. She even suspects him when he is paid to drive a man and his wife to town in his car." The neighbor spoke from intimate knowledge. After quarreling with her husband, Laura had been set down along the roadside. On reaching Cardston she rushed to the parked car, and shouted at her astonished neighbor who was sitting there alone, "Pointed Plume and your wife are sweet- 593 [586] [577] [586] [152] 593 586 152 578

593 621 571 Many Mules obtained five head and drove them into the corral of Big Black Collar. On seeing them, Big Black Collar was furious and ordered Many Mules to get rid of them. Instead Many Mules moved with his mother to the camp of his mother's sister's husband who was a cattle owner.

The result of this situation for a young man was that he moved from one relative's camp to the next until he found the authority which was least arduous. However, until he became economically independent, he could not [581] maintain a wife and tipi. This may be considered another reward for marriage: when one becomes supreme authority in one's own tipi.

937 562 [577] [578] Marriage in itself was an unstable affair due to other factors. Here there exists a conflict between the male dogma that any woman was a legitimate sex object and the ideal embodied in the Sun Dance vower, that a bride be not only a virgin but as a wife remain perpetually faithful to her husband. Unmarried men were always a threat to the stability of a marriage, for few men would tolerate clandestine affairs on the part of their wives. The relative rarity of Sun Dance vowers as compared with those women who were [684] ineligible to vow the Sun Dance because of past misconduct bespeaks the frequency of these illicit affairs. As women were credited with the initiative in love, the punishment was usually directed toward them rather than the [621] co-respondent, and this punishment was often severe in the extreme. Pat- [152] terns of male suspiciousness and jealousy were rampant: Wives were beaten merely after seeing another man beat his wife; suspicious men even moved [578] from the protection of a camp to the open prairie where they were easy prey [593] to enemy raiding parties, rather than risk their wives in a camp filled with bachelors; young men suspected of complicity were attacked without warning by irate husbands. The reason for this conduct may be partly understood on the basis of affronted authority. As unfaithfulness on the part of a wife threatened the very existence of the domain over which a man had supreme authority and might reduce him to acknowledging authority in another tipi group as an ignominious visitor who could not care for himself, marriage stability was a very personal and vested interest for a male. To protect the household the punishment was extreme, varying from mutilation in order to make her less attractive, to society rape fests that she might be given her fill of sexual experience with other men, to merely shooting her. All this was carried out in a fit of rage under the name of disillusioned love: "I loved her so much, and then she was unfaithful to me." The restorative aspects of these measures must be stressed, for since the wife was usually not sent away, the punishment was intended to make the household more [682] secure. Should the extreme have occurred, murder was always followed by [765] the customary mourning rites that approximated those following natural death. Only when the integrity of the household could be preserved in any

12: Hanks & Richardson E,P-5 (1938, 1939) 1966
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case, as where there was more than one wife, was a woman sent away, for above all the preservation of the household was primary.

Of course, unfaithfulness reflected unfavorably also on the reputation of the woman's family. Thus, a wife's male relative in cases where the woman was at fault cooperated in the attempts at education and sanctioned this severe treatment. In fact, this constituted a bond of interest between a wife's relatives and her husband. During the actual fracas between husband, wife and co-respondent, the person expected to restore equilibrium was the elder brother or father of the co-respondent. He, seeking to reduce the tension between the families, would send horses to the aggrieved husband. No rebuke would be given a son who was co-respondent not only because the woman was theoretically responsible, but, as one informant expressed it, "because the father would think back to the days when he was young and understand how his boy felt."

Generally the strength of the conjugal family varies inversely with the strength of the blood bonds. Curiously, however, Plains individualism to the point of anarchy served to maintain the strength of both. When the irritations of the authority of one's elders became too great, one might establish his own tipi if economically possible. But the instability of the marriage bond often sent one back to renew the relationship with people of one's own blood. At one end the security of a man of accomplishment was in his own tipi of wives and children; at the other extreme, with complete failure of all endeavors, security could be found in the group of his own blood as refuge.

Current Changes in Kinship

With the settling of the Blackfoot on a reservation, three main changes have occurred. The old economy disappeared, and in its place agriculture and herding under white management have been substituted. With this change the nomadic mode of life has been replaced by a semi-sedentary life within the limits of an Indian reserve. The band as the social unit for defensive war, residence and hunting, has disintegrated into its component units, the extended families. Whites have moved into southern Alberta, where they have engulfed the reserve. Though the Blackfoot, because of their status as treaty Indians, live separately from the Whites, the latter influence Blackfoot institutions.

In what ways has the kinship terminology been influenced by these changes? The majority of such changes can be subsumed under an extension of the principle of age-grading with reference to ego and ego's father. While formerly all the women of father's family were termed "grandparent," today father's younger sister becomes ego's "older sister," or "younger sib-

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
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When this pressure was unavailing, the two were shunned by all. After several months together, the two quarrelled among themselves over suspected unfaithfulness. They separated, and the man committed suicide after leaving behind notes addressed to his first wife. The woman later remarried, though to a man of lower status than herself, and by exemplary behavior and even some show of submissiveness has lived down much of the scandal.

Here all pressure failed to dissolve the match, even ostracism. When the microcosm itself collapsed, there were no other face-saving alternatives for the man than suicide, and suicide under any circumstances is very rare. Usually the agency policy is laissez-faire with respect to marital affairs, and the foregoing case shows that the maximum persuasion came from relatives and other Indians who "cut" them socially. The agency is more often invoked to untangle the conflicting claims on property between the offended and the offending parties after separation. Here the council of chiefs is particularly useful in advising the agent as to Blackfoot practice and sentiment.

Although we have no substantiating statistics, the frequency of separation seems higher today than in former times. There are few Blackfoot who have not separated and remarried at least once, more often four or five times. "Stealing" of wives or husbands, i.e., infidelity, is a frequent accusation, and the resultant jealousy becomes the cause for most separations. In the past a husband's suspicion of unfaithfulness led to brutal treatment of his wife, such as nose-cutting, society "rape" fests, or his sending her away. Of late such jealousy seems to have increased, particularly since women as well as men are today considered capable of jealousy. The offended spouse either departs or sends the offender away, if the latter has not already eloped. This probably means the termination of two marriages, that of the co-respondent and that of the unfaithful woman. As a result, conflicting claims for horses, wagons, and household furnishings between these parties arise, and settlement becomes a delicate problem for the agent and the council of chiefs.

The causes for the increased fragility of marriage bonds lie in the many social changes that have occurred since settling on the reserve. First, we note an increased proportion of males to females, after the cessation of wars. Seduction has long been considered an unofficial male *coup*, and as this feeling has not diminished, and people live in greater proximity, opportunities for illicit affairs are greater today. In the second place, the punishment meted out by the offended husband has decreased in severity in the light of white disapproval of mutilation.

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
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survived the many dangers of war and wilderness living and their offspring might be likely to survive in the same way. Because of the constant warring, the fatality rate among young men was pretty high, which gave the people a majority of women. That was probably the major reason why men had several wives.

However, just as wild bulls jealously protect their harems and fight intruders, so did my grandfathers watch over their wives. Tribal customs allowed them to kill intruders, or at least demand heavy retributions, but still the calls of nature could not always be ignored. Many young wives of old men in big households suffered from loneliness and a desire to be loved. Many young men risked their lives to find mutual satisfaction if they could meet with such a lonely girl out along one of the trails to the water or the firewood-gathering places. Some old men even sanctioned these relationships, as long as they were discreet and brought them no public disgrace. Occasionally an older husband would give up one of his younger wives if he knew that she was hopelessly in love with a good young man. However, more often such romances brought much frustration and unhappiness, and suicide was not uncommon among young, heartbroken women.

The tribal truth test for the virtuousness of women was the grand Sun Dance ceremony, since only those women who had been true to their husbands were eligible to make the sacred vows. It was not unusual for a husband to challenge his wife to put up a Sun Dance if he doubted her faithfulness to him. All members of the tribe were raised to understand that lying under any such sacred circumstances meant death to the liar and suffering to the relatives. That is not to say that the Sun Dance was mainly such a truth test for the holy woman, since most of those women lived well-known lives far above reproach. But there are stories of women whose virtuousness was publicly contested and whose death soon after was taken as final proof by all the people.

a granary, drilled a hole in the wall, and the grain poured out into my wagon. I spent the money on liquor. 753 685 159

Eventually the day came when I went broke. I went to jail and my wife shacked up with other men. I had eleven children and they went away while I was in jail. The things I stole, which made me act like a rich man, they all vanished. When I got out of jail I had no place to stay. No one cared for me. They knew I was a drunkard and that I had lived a bad life. 159 733 [593] [837]

But now I pray to God. I quit smoking, I quit drinking, and I quit stealing. I became a Christian. I have a new wife. I pray with her and I don't find life so hard. 733 797 159

MY DAD, HIS NAME IS DOG CHILD

Oki, I am First Rider. Now I am going to tell about my father and mother. My father's childhood name was Singing Amongst. When he grew older, he got a different name. A girl who lived with my father's father, she was a relative, she strung duck beaks and duck legs and tied them around my father's neck. Thus, he became known by the name Duck Necklace. 551 553 [301] [237]

My father's father was Holy Descent; my father's mother was Under Making Noise. There were four sons: Striped Wolf, the eldest; then my father, Duck Necklace; after him, Mistaken Chief; and the youngest was Shoot at Close Range. Holy Descent was ninety-seven years old when he died; he didn't winter the three [didn't live the final three years to become a hundred]. 551

That old man, my grandfather, as the time came, he told his relatives exactly when he would die. "When Morning Star comes up, then I will depart from you." He prepared himself for his death. He put on his good shirt, a thick, spleen-colored material. He put on his coat, a Hudson's Bay blanket, and his leggings, made from a Hudson's Bay blanket. He put his fine-cut tobacco and his pipe beside him. Then he began to tell 763

through the edge of his shirt; neither had gotten hurt. 721 608

Now this is strange: one's name was Striped Wolf and the other's Striped Bird—just about the same name. They exchanged names. They shook hands and kissed, and became like brothers. All the Gros Ventre's relatives gave Striped Wolf a lot of presents—money, blankets, and other things. They remained good friends until they died. [553] [431]

THE HANGING OF CHARCOAL

Charcoal's days ended in 1897 at the age of thirty-nine, on the gallows at Fort MacLeod. Before his death, Tsako, as our People nicknamed him, became the most wanted man on Canada's western frontier. 682 [551]

Wilson wrote of Charcoal as a participant in a Nighttime Ceremony and recorded that he had owned a number of Medicines for which he sang songs: painted lodge and flag; painted lodge; Sioux sword for the Grass Dance; Horns Society; Mountain-Trim Tipi; Soldier's Society Pipe; Weasel-tail buckskin suits; Dogs Society; and bear knife. This last sacred article was a huge dagger with a handle made from a bear's jawbone. It was sought after and owned only by Powerful warriors. During the transfer ceremony for this knife, the new Owner was forced to strip and roll on a bed of thorns. At the end of the transfer the former Owner would hurl the sacred knife at the new Owner, who could have it if he survived and caught it. 778 425 [411] [237] [796] [785]

Charcoal had two wives. One was faithful to him, but the other, Pretty Wolverine Woman, was fickle and wild. Although she had been married to Charcoal for about five years, everyone in camp knew that she and a young man named Medicine Pipe Stem were lovers. They had been seen together while she went out after water. Charcoal's relative, Eagle-Bear, had talked to her several times and warned her that her husband could punish her for her actions. Charcoal was known 682 837 [595] [411]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 28D-B]
[P. 279-B]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
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Blood

for his collection of weapons—guns, shells, and knives—and for his ability to use them. Nevertheless, he was a well-liked and respectable man. He was noted for having some Powers to doctor. 682 837 [411]

It was haying season in the land of the Bloods, and Charcoal cut hay with a group led by Eagle Bear. Sometimes one or both of Charcoal's wives came along to help. One night the haying party returned home and saw Medicine Pipe Stem leaving Charcoal's tipi in a hurry. When Charcoal went inside he said nothing to his younger wife, but he noticed that her lover had left his hat behind.

The next day Charcoal asked his young wife to help him with the day's work. She complained of a headache and remained at home. The haying

[p. 280-B]

party spent the day hauling hay to Fish Creek, where the Mounted Police had their horses. At lunchtime Charcoal also complained of a headache and went back home. 682 837

Charcoal timed his arrival in the camp quite well—his wife was gone, and so was her horse. He took along one of his rifles and went out to search for her. He saw his wife's horse tied to a tree. He dismounted and quietly went up to surprise the pair as they were making love in the bushes. He shot Medicine Pipe Stem once. The bullet was said to have gone through the eye, leaving no trace when the eyelid closed over it. Charcoal took his wife back to camp with him, and she said nothing about the incident to anyone. 682 684

Charcoal feared punishment by the white man's law so he prepared to leave the reserve. (According to our old customs, he was justified in his shooting. The payment of some horses and goods to the dead man's family would have settled the issue.) One evening he rode past the home of the store-owner and farm instructor, McNeill, and shot at him through a window. McNeill was not liked by all our People, and it is said that he and Charcoal had feuded some time before. His shot injured McNeill. 682 [683]

Charcoal went back to his family and told his wives to pack up their camp. He took along his mother-in-law, his daughter, and his two sons. They headed west toward the Rocky Mountains.

In the meantime, Medicine Pipe Stem's body had been found, and the Mounted Police soon connected the murder with McNeill's shooting and Charcoal's hasty departure. They quickly got on his trail. 682 657

The Mounted Police found Charcoal's camp in a hidden meadow at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. They were greeted with a round of rifle fire. By the time the police managed to crawl up to Charcoal's lodge, they found only his old mother-in-law and his daughter inside. Charcoal, meanwhile, had gone around the other way to make his escape, along with his wives and sons. In

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
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to furnish the material support for a wife, mother, sister, or in fact any woman who will come forward to perform the ceremony. Thus, a Blood chief once told us that he had been very ill all winter; that he had tried all kinds of doctors without relief, until he was stripped of all his property. At last, he recovered and then made a vow that with the help of his wife he would give the sun dance. This he did, but, as he expressed it, "with great difficulty because he was then poor and did not receive adequate help from his relatives."

Again, it must be noted that women who do not feel equal to the responsibility of the medicine woman's office, make a vow to announce publicly their virginity or faithfulness to their marriage vows, as the case may be, though for an unmarried woman to make such a pledge is the exception. This is spoken of as "the going forward to the tongues," the full meaning of which will appear later. The manner and occasion of making this vow are in most respects similar to the preceding. At a certain stage of the sun dance proceedings, all the women who made such a promise to the sun, come forward and make their statements subject to the challenge of any man present. This bears some resemblance to the virginity tests of the Dakota, but applies more particularly to married women and marital virtue than otherwise.

Naturally, the number of women making promises of this kind was much greater than for the more important ceremony. Thus, we have a custom of calling upon the sun in time of need which is an almost universal practice, a more restricted form of such appeal peculiar to women in so far that sexual morality is a necessary qualification, the more specific vow of "going forward to the tongues", and the exceptional vow to perform the medicine woman's functions at the sun dance, a fair illustration of the way in which most complex folk ceremonies are supported by a pyramid of less and less differentiated practices.

In passing, it should be noted that when the vow is made to perform the medicine woman's functions, it is literally an obligation to purchase a natoas bundle, or if already the owner of a bundle, to perform its ritual.[1] A woman may own more than one of these bundles at a time; indeed, we have heard of a woman purchasing new ones at several successive sun dances. This purchase is a fundamental feature in all bundle ceremonies to which the sun dance bundle offers no exception.

On the other hand, the vow means more than the mere purchase of a bundle. We are told that the requirement as to virtue holds strictly for the vow and the tongue ceremony. A woman can buy a natoas in the ordinary

[1] This series, volume 7, 215.

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
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796 782 793 432 837 sense and have it transferred with the ritual even though she has not been true to her husband. We are reminded that Scabby-round-robe's wife[1] was not true to her former husband and that when her husband received a beaver bundle there went with it a natoas and accessories; but that while she could use them by virtue of her relation to a beaver bundle, she was not competent to make a vow and initiate a sun dance.[2] This is consistent with the tradition that the natoas was once bought from a beaver bundle by a woman who gave the sun dance for that year and used instead of a wreath of juniper as in former ceremonies. It also throws some light on the relation of the natoas to the beaver and the sun dance rituals.

Ceremony of the Tongues.

796 782 793 While it is obvious from the preceding, that the medicine woman takes her vow at no fixed period in the year, the order of procedure is such that as a rule, she must have taken her vow not later than the spring of the year in which the sun dance occurs. There is no absolute prohibition to qualifying at a later time, as is often the case at present when the consent of the Indian Agent must be obtained before the ceremony is permitted, but the normal order seems to be as just stated. Any way, in the spring, the medicine woman calls upon her relatives for buffalo tongues (in recent years, those of cattle). These are then saved as requested. In passing, it may be noted [602] that in all ceremonies, the persons upon whom the burden of responsibility falls have not only an inherent right to call upon their blood relatives, but these in turn are under obligations to respond. The number of tongues required is uncertain, some informants claiming that there should be an even hundred, others, that four to five full parfleches was the standard. [252] Naturally, in recent years, the number has been much less. These tongues [251] are to be sliced, parboiled, and dried like meat. The slices, however, must be perfect, without holes, and come from the interior of the tongue.

The slicing of these tongues appears to have been the first ceremony of the cycle. It is conducted by a man, usually the father, who formally announced the woman's vow and who conducts all the ceremonies in which

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[1] This series, vol. 2, 83.

[2] For example, we were told that some few years ago the widow of Spotted-eagle took the part of the medicine woman and borrowed a natoas from the mother of Curly-bear. Recently (1911), the latter died. Then the former claimed the natoas on the grounds that she had paid full value for it at the time and that she had now the most right to it. Curly-bear consented. Then, after an interval, this woman transferred it to the wife of —— who made no vow to give the sun dance, for it was generally known that the reputation of the new owner permanently disqualified her for the function of medicine woman.

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pray for themselves and their relatives after which they distribute dried tongue among them. Finally, there is a general distribution of tongues among the people.

However, there is another aspect of their appearance at this point. The Blackfoot assume that many women have at one or more periods of their lives been invited by a man to commit the offence and that often the occasion is one of great temptation or calls for great presence of mind and will power. Now, when addressing the sun, if so approached, the woman narrates the circumstances, naming the men committing the offence, and recounts the manner of her refusal. In naming the offender, they usually say, "I suppose he hears what I say." These women are also subject to challenge of their having committed adultery. It will be seen from this that the part they take in the ceremony is an ordeal for which most women have little liking and one which they will not undertake lightly. The Blackfoot, themselves, regard it as one of the most solemn occasions in the ceremony. So far as we could learn, no one now living was ever present when one of these women was challenged, but the naming of men who were guilty of improper advances was not unusual.

A retrospect of the concept of the tongues indicates that the entire ceremony, or their association with the medicine woman and those who are sexually pure, gives them a potency that may be acquired by eating. They seem most closely associated with sexual purity since they are less primary in the function of the medicine woman than in case of those who "go forward," the former being required to possess many virtues, the latter but one. While the medicine woman fasts and keeps to her tipi, the others do not.

The Medicine Woman.

We shall now give our attention to the medicine woman. As previously stated, she is in most respects the central figure in the whole ceremony, around whom centers its more serious and solemn aspects. On the fifth day, an elaborate ritual is demonstrated in her tipi, culminating in the procession to the dancing lodge. To this ritual belongs a medicine bundle with accessories, known as the natoas, though the name is primarily that of the headdress which the bundle contains. This bundle is transferred in the ritualistic way to the medicine woman by the ceremony and thus becomes hers to care for and guard until used again at another sun dance ceremony. The ritual and the bundle have been discussed in detail in Volume 7 of this series. In addition to the contents of the bundle, there must be a special robe of elkskin, a dress of the same material, and wristlets of strong elk teeth.

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bundle.[1] Yet, the conditions here are slightly different from those for other bundles in that the father must provide or is charged with the responsibility to see that a natoas is provided. Following the vow, either he or the son makes formal application to the owner of a natoas by the usual presentation of a pipe.[2] [796] [778] [432]

When the daughter begins her fasting, the father has the natoas brought to her tipi. As a rule, the father's wife owns a natoas. Some informants claim that even should the daughter own a natoas, the father must provide another. On the other hand, the daughter can select the eligible natoas. In any case, the father furnishes the daughter with a dress and an elk robe for which he must be paid liberally.[3] [785] [124]

In conclusion, it may be remarked that anyone can make up a natoas, if he has a dream so directing him; also, if he owned a natoas that was lost or otherwise destroyed; if he gave it away, without receiving payment; or if it was buried with someone. Having owned a natoas and transferred it, he cannot duplicate it; should the new owner lose it, he may, if called upon, replace it; likewise, if buried, the surviving husband or wife could call upon him. In all such cases fees are given. When one transfers a medicine bundle and has been paid for it, he has no more right to it and cannot duplicate it on his own motion. Should one sell the bundle without the ceremony of transfer, the ritual remains with him and he can again make up the bundle; should one make the transfer and fail to receive the pay, or waive the pay, he can make it up again. The relatives of one buried with a bundle can call upon a former owner to make it up, after which it must be formally transferred to one of them. Men were sometimes killed on the warpath and their bundles lost; such were replaced as noted above. In every case these must be true duplicates; it is only a dream that authorizes new creations, or variations, however slight.

An interesting sidelight is thrown upon the idealized qualities of this woman's function by the following narrative:— [796] [793] [837]

Once while a medicine woman was sleeping in the sacred tipi during the fasting, a nephew of her husband stole in and made improper advances.

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[1] In former times, the natoas and the medicine woman's costume were owned by a beaver man. When a woman gave a sun dance she gave a horse for their use. She just borrowed them. Later on, a beaver man transferred them, whence they became a separate bundle.— Tom Kiyo. [422] [778] [426]

[2] Should the woman already own a natoas and the transferrer (father) own one; the woman must say which bundle shall be used. She can use her own, borrow, or purchase of the transferrer.— Curly-bear.

[3] A Piegan informant comments as follows: The woman can either buy or borrow a natoas. In the olden times she often borrowed because the natoas, the dress, the elk tooth wristlets, and the robe were owned by a beaver man's wife. After a time, however, these were transferred to a medicine woman and were thus separated from the beaver bundle. [426]

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Being a good and true woman, like all others who give the sun dance, she spurned him. Next day she told her husband the whole story. He was very angry. He was not satisfied with the confession she made, but suspected that she must have given the young man some encouragement. So when all the medicinemen and women had come into the tipi to rehearse the songs as usual, he made a statement of these suspicions and as he had two wives, he proposed to have them change places.

The medicinemen pleaded for the first wife because they believed her innocent, but the husband was obdurate. So the second wife was called in to take the place. Then the first wife said, "It was I who saved this man's life when he was ill. I made the vow to give the sun dance and he got well. I have suffered much in fasting, all for him. Now he disgraces me before all the people. But I will put my virtue to a test. If I am true, I have already acquired power."

She filled a pipe, went outside and standing now on the east side of the tipi, then on the south, the west, and the north, she addressed the sun. The day was clear, but soon after the woman entered the tipi, thunder was heard. A storm came down with hail and blew over many tipis. But in spite of these proofs, her husband was obdurate and the second wife went on with the ceremony.

Not long after the sun dance this same man became ill again. Finally, as a last resort, he called upon the first wife to save him again. This woman told him to call upon the other woman as he seemed to have so much faith in her. So he died and was properly punished for so unjustly treating his faithful wife.

The Procession to the Dancing Lodge.

In our account of the natoas ritual we told how the father, son, etc., emerge from their tipi. The file is headed by the father, followed by the son, next the mother, then the medicine woman followed by women bearing the tongues. The father and the son are muffled in blankets (robes); the latter walks with bowed head, leaning heavily on a staff and bearing over his head a wild rhubarb stalk.[1] The medicine woman wears the natoas on her head, an elkskin (often buckskin) dress and an elkskin robe, with the digging-stick on her back. For a staff, she uses one of the smudge sticks. The women in her rear bear parfleches containing the tongues, together with blankets and other ordinary objects. Two or three old men act as

[1] Scar-face is said to have made a whistle (flageolet) of such a stalk. The pith of the growing plant is sometimes eaten for food.

to get wood for the lodge fire, she herself did the heavy work, the other merely idling about and taking up a few dry branches now and then. To all of which Otter Woman would never make denial, and Talks-with-the-Buffalo would look at her, at each of them in turn, and grimly smile. 595

Otter Woman often came to visit her father and mother and tell them, incidentally, of fresh meanness that the jealous one had put upon her. And at last Eagle Plume, angry and hurt, said to her: "Daughter, I see that I made a mistake in urging you to marry my more-than-friend. I am disappointed in him. As he will not protect you from that lying woman it is for me to do so; go at once, and take up your belongings, and return home." [586]

"No, father, no," she replied. "You showed me my duty to our tribe. I shall remain with the man to whom you gave me, no matter how much his second wife lies about me." [581]

But as Bear Head said afterward, little did Otter Woman, or any of us, realize how mean was that jealous woman's heart.

Came from the north, from the camp of our brother tribe, the Bloods, four young men to visit friends in our camp, and one of them was Low Horn, he who was nicknamed "Handsome Man." And rightly: he was unquestionably the handsomest of all the men of the three tribes of the Blackfeet. So handsome, so graceful in all that he did, so perfect of figure and face that I shall not attempt to describe him. A bachelor and a lady killer he was, too, desired by all the maidens and doubtless by many a married woman. Some men were so jealous of him that when he staged one of his spectacular dances around the circle of the camp, they ordered their women into their lodges, there to remain until he had passed. Yes, Handsome Man was a dandy, a "fop," as we would say. He had no war record other than having been on one successful raid upon the horse herds of the Crees. Was he, as some maintained, a coward, deserving to be forced to wear a woman's gown, instead of shirt and leggings and breechcloth? [152] [577]

On a hot summer morning, soon after he arrived, word went the round of the camp that Handsome Man was going to dance. Under a shelter of poles and brush, close to their lodge, sat Talks-with-the- 595 837

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595 837 Buffalo and his women, and as I was passing he invited me to sit and smoke with him. I casually noticed that his sits-beside-him-wife, as the Blackfeet call a man's first wife, was idle; the two others were busily quilling the uppers of a pair of moccasins for their man, quilling in ancient designs and gorgeous hues.

"Would that I could have a pair of moccasins as beautiful as those are to be," I said.

"Get married, then, and have all the pretty moccasins that you can wear," Otter Woman replied.

"Easy to do were I as good looking as he there coming," I said, pointing to Handsome Man, flanked by his singing, drumming friends and just then starting to dance along the inner line of the lodges of the big camp circle.

[535] [14] [411] [237] On they came, Handsome Man slightly in the lead, dressed in a suit of beautifully fringed and quilled war clothes, face and hands and moccasins red painted, brandishing a war club banded with snow-white eagle plumes. Lithely, gracefully, he danced, in perfect time with the thrilling singing and drumming of his followers. Said Talks-with-the-Buffalo, lips contemptuously curling: "But why war club, weapon that he has never used and never will use upon the enemy?"

"But he is still so young; give him time, my man; give him time to use it, as I am sure he will," the sits-beside-him wife replied.

"*Ha!* Wouldn't use it were he to live ten hundred years," he growled and spat upon the ground.

For all its apparent ease, Handsome Man's war dance was strenuous work, particularly on a day so hot; finally tiring, perspiration streaking his painted face, Handsome Man motioned his followers to be silent, and came to a stand close in front of our shelter. And just then Otter Woman held out a questioning hand to her jealous enemy, *Otahki*, and said, "Give me Handsome Man." And then; "Oh, what a mistake! I meant my awl; my awl that you borrowed."

But before she could finish, *Otahki* was already all but shouting to Talks-with-the-Buffalo: "My man! Did you hear her, your new wife? She told me, 'Give me Handsome Man.'"

Talks-with-the-Buffalo frowned, stared at Otter Woman. She

returned his gaze, frankly, unflinchingly, and said, "I don't know why I named the dancer for he is nothing to me, nothing at all; no more than the passing wind."

"What a lie! She loves him so much that she can't think of anything else, even to remember that it was her awl that she wanted."

And Handsome Man and his followers heard; they had heard it all, so close were they to our shelter. The followers were embarrassed; their heads drooped; they looked at the ground, anywhere but toward us. But Handsome Man was pleased; boldly, smilingly, he looked at Otter Woman; glanced at angry Talks-with-the-Buffalo and again at Otter Woman. Happily, smugly, he looked at her, sure that, despite her denial of him, she, the most beautiful woman of the camp, was still another victim of his charms. Warily he glanced again at her grimly scowling man; again he smiled at her, and, signing to his followers to resume their drumming, went singing and dancing from us with renewed vigor and grace. Of us all, *Otahki* alone watched his sprightly going. Otter Woman raised her drooping head, tearfully, pleadingly looked at Talks-with-the-Buffalo, and began: "My man . . ."

He shrugged his shoulders, looked away from her. As though half-dazed, she fumblingly gathered up her quilling materials and went slowly into their lodge. *Otahki* laughed. Her sister *Paiota* frowned at her and said: "Be still, you!"

Silently I handed the smoked-out pipe to my friend and joined Bear Head and his women, sitting under their sun shelter. They had sensed something unpleasant whence I had come, and I told them what had happened. Poor Otter Woman. Never could she be at peace there in that family, they said, for *Otahki* was of very mean heart, very jealous of her, and would do all that she possibly could to make Talks-with-the-Buffalo cast her off.

I had at that time a fly rod, one that I had brought from the States and dearly cherished, for it was, so far as I knew, the only fly rod in all Montana Territory. At sundown that evening I went fishing, accompanied by Bear Head. Not that he fished, or even ate fish, for they were the food of the dread Underwater People and therefore taboo by all of the Blackfoot tribes. But he keenly enjoyed

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watching me handle the fragile tackle and happily shouted at the sudden leap of a big trout to seize the fly, and its furious and sometimes successful struggle to free itself.

On this evening we struck the stream a few hundred yards above camp and turned down it. And I had no luck, whipping pool after pool and getting not a single rise, though we could see many large trout in their clear depths. But at last, when it was really dusk, I hooked a big one, and after many rushes and leaps it gave up the struggle and I got it out upon the shore. It was enough, more than enough, for my breakfast, so I unjointed and cased the rod, and we went on down the shore to strike the camp water trail and so avoid tearing our way through the thick and thorny brush. Our moccasined feet were noiseless upon the sandy shore; we had rounded a sharp bend and turned into the well-worn trail when from a dense growth of willows two others came into it. In the deeper darkness of the timber they were so near that we recognized them: Handsome Man and *Otahki!* Each had an arm about the other's waist. They had, of course, made sure that there was no one at the stream; sought only to avoid anyone coming out from camp; so, great was their surprise at seeing us almost upon them. It was *Otahki* who first saw us, and with gasping "*Nayeyah!*" she broke from him and ran for camp, he plunging back into the willows whence they had come.

Bear Head and I went on, came to a stand upon reaching the open, but could not distinguish *Otahki* among the many going to and fro in the big camp; she had doubtless already gone into her lodge. We wondered how she had managed to slip out by herself to meet Handsome Man, and probably not for the first time. For only very old women and women already branded for infidelity went alone beyond the circle of the camp, even for wood or water.

Said Bear Head: "That *Otahki!* I have always suspected that, given the opportunity, she would be that kind of woman.

"What are you going to do about it, tell Talks-with-the-Buffalo what we have seen?"

"No. We men are not tale bearers—gossips. She will soon be discovered in her badness and be made to suffer the punishment that she deserves."

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The following day broke so hot and windless that, right after our morning meal, we all gathered in the slightly cooler shade of our sun shelter. So was it that we saw *Otahki* emerge from her lodge and after a moment move slowly out into the camp circle, pausing now and then to speak with some of those she met. Bear Head gave me a nod and a look of understanding when she appeared, and we kept our eyes upon her; and so, as it proved, did his two wives, for suddenly the elder of them exclaimed: "Bear Head! Look at *Otahki*, across there; close in front of Three Bulls' lodge, standing and talking with Handsome Man. What a bad one she is."

"Pretending to be so good! What can they be talking about? I am minded to run and call Otter Woman out, so that she can get Talks-with-the-Buffalo out to see them there," said the younger wife.

"You two, you are not to speak of it to anyone. It matters not to us what that woman does," Bear Head emphatically told them.

"But it does concern us. You know how mean she is to Otter Woman; we should do all that we can to help her, she our close friend," pleaded the older wife.

"You two, you heard me," Bear Head crossly replied. And just then *Otahki* and Handsome Man parted, she strolling down to the lower end of camp and thence back to her lodge, and he entered Three Bulls' lodge, in which he was a guest.

Later in the day, when for a moment we chanced to be alone, Bear Head said to me: "Those two, this morning; no doubt they arranged for another love meeting in the brush."

Otahki and Otter Woman, always together as was proper, were the water carriers for Talks-with-the-Buffalo's lodge. On this evening, near sunset it was, as the two were going for a supply to last the night, *Otahki* suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, I forgot that I need water for myself; for washing my other gown. I will go back for another bucket and meet you at the creek."

Otter Woman went on across camp and into the trail running through the timber to the creek and, when about halfway to the stream, heard a quick step close in her rear. It couldn't be *Otahki* back so soon, she thought, and then, before she could turn to look, Handsome Man was upon her; clasping her tightly to him; pinioning

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her arms to her sides and saying, "You are here, my sweetheart. I am glad; glad. Come, hurry. Our horses are out here a little way; a good one for you."

"Let me go, you dog-face, you nothing-man," she cried, struggling to free herself.

"Why talk that way? This is no time to talk. Come on," he urged.

Harder than ever she tried to get out from his encircling arms; to bite him. Little by little he was forcing her backward from the trail; suddenly her foot struck a fallen sapling and she went down upon her back, he with her; and then he was trying to raise her up onto her feet. She felt for her sheath knife with her now free hand; grasped its handle but could not draw it. He was saying to her: "Why pretend, my sweetheart? Come, we must hurry to the horses."

"You dog-face! Are you crazy? Go with you? Never! Let me go. Let me go," she cried.

And then they heard one all but shout: "Badger Woman! Look at them. Look at her, that Otter Woman; she who always pretends to be so good."

At that, Handsome Man sprang off into the brush, and, free of him, Otter Woman got up and faced *Otahki* and that one with her, solemn-faced Badger Woman, sits-beside-him-wife of Red Bird's Tail. And laughing, dancing, pointing, *Otahki* again said to Badger Woman: "Oh, what a two-tongue she is! It was only this morning that she said that Handsome Man was nothing to her; no more than the passing wind. Well, Talks-with-the-Buffalo shall know of it at once. I am going, going, going to tell him, at once, to tell him what we found here."

Away she went, lightly running, swinging her empty pail. And said Otter Woman to the other: "I hope that you don't think that I am a bad one, a liar. I had never spoken with that dog-face. He surprised me, seized me; wanted me to run off with him. I was trying to get at my knife to stab him when you two came."

Old Badger Woman made no reply to that; she only stood and stared at the young one, sorrowfully stared at her, then turned and went back upon the trail, shaking her head, muttering to herself.

Hardly knowing what she was doing, Otter Woman recovered

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her bucket, filled it at the creek, and trembling turned back toward camp. She dreaded returning to her lodge and facing Talks-with-the-Buffalo. She was minded to go straight to her father and mother, seek their protection. But no. She was innocent; never in her whole life had she done anything that was not right; all knew that she was a good, virtuous woman. She would tell her man that the Blood, the dog-face that he was, had made a surprise attack upon her, and he could not help believing that she spoke the truth. "Oh, Sun; all you Above Ones: Pity me; help me," she silently prayed, and thrust aside the door curtain and went in.

But only *Paiota* and *Otahki* were within; and the latter meanly smiling, said to her: "You are wondering where is our man? Well, he took up his gun and went out to kill your sweetheart, Handsome Man."

"You bad woman, you know that he is no sweetheart of mine. Oh, what a terrible tongue you are!" Otter Woman replied.

"I know, and so does Badger Woman, what we saw out there near the creek. *Ha!* when our man returns he will make you cry; and then out you go, you and all that you have here."

Said Otter Woman then to the elder wife: "Surely you don't believe that the dog-face Blood is anything to me?"

"Girl, all I know about is what I hear. I am sorry, but truly it all looks bad for you," *Paiota* replied.

None of this came to us until later; but about this time we in Bear Head's lodge became aware of excitement on the other side of camp, and presently Bear Head went out to learn what was going on there. So was it that, after a while, we learned that Talks-with-the-Buffalo was seeking Handsome Man; wanting to kill him. But the latter had disappeared, gone off with two horses, one of them owned by a Blood friend, and taken without his knowledge or consent. Upon learning that, Talks-with-the-Buffalo had come home, saddled his fastest buffalo horse, and set out in pursuit of him. And then, of course, and soon, we learned, the whole camp learned what it was all about, *Otahki* being only too eager to tell of her and Badger Woman's discovery in the timber.

The tale of it came to Eagle Plume's lodge, and he and his woman

595 hurried to their daughter and urged her to return to them; they were
837 not going to allow her to be disfigured because of *Otahki's* lies. And
[684] that one they denounced with all the epithets of the Blackfoot lan-
[782] guage. But Otter Woman would not listen to their pleadings. She had done no wrong; she had prayed the Above Ones for help; they were with her, they would not allow her to suffer for something that she had not done. To leave her man's lodge now would be to admit that she was guilty.

It was near midnight when Eagle Plume and his woman went back to their lodge, without their daughter. And when, a little later, we took to our couches, Talks-with-the-Buffalo had not returned.

But he came back sometime in the night, so Bear Head's elder wife said when she had built our morning fire and awakened us. And she had it from *Paiota* that he had not overtaken Handsome Man.

As Bear Head and I were returning from our early plunge in the creek, he said to me: "In Talks-with-the-Buffalo's lodge, this morn-
[574] ing, there will be a big talk about Otter Woman. If he fails to invite us, we must anyhow attend it."

"Will you tell the gathering what we saw out here, two nights back?" I asked.

"I don't know. I don't know what I shall do about it." And then, when we were almost to the doorway of our lodge, he brought me
[562] to a stand and added: "The strength of our tribe is in our women. The good ones should be praised, favored in every way; the bad ones should be punished."

[574] It was about ten o'clock when Talks-with-the-Buffalo stood be-
[623] fore his lodge and shouted invitations to this and that prominent man of the camp to come to his lodge for a talk. Bear Head and I were not named. We saw the great ones go in one by one: White Calf, the head chief; Running Crane; Three Suns; Fast Buffalo Horse; Little Dog; and other clan chiefs and medicine men to the number of twelve. Then we slipped in after them and seated ourselves just to the right of the doorway. Came in then still another uninvited one, Otter Woman's father, Eagle Plume, and sat down on my right. His face was grim. And last of all came Badger Woman and her man and sat just within the doorway.

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Grim, too, was Talks-with-the-Buffalo, upon his couch at the rear of the lodge. *Paiota,* solemn of face, sat with him as was her right. Upon her own couch, to the left of the fireplace, was *Otahki,* erect, bright eyed, eager for the talk to begin. Upon a third couch, between that of *Otahki* and the doorway, sat Otter Woman; bowed over; motionless; blanket over her head and partly concealing her face. The invited ones were all of them on the right side of the lodge, their seats spreadings of soft buffalo robes, White Calf nearest of them to their host.

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None spoke. The silence became oppressive. White Calf broke it: "Yes?" he asked.

"Ah, yes," Talks-with-the-Buffalo replied, and then: "My friends, you have heard recent talk about one of my women, Otter Woman, there sitting. I now want you to hear just what her accuser says of her, and then help me decide what shall be done about it."

"*Ah. Ah,*" several of the gathering acquiesced, and he sternly said to the accuser: "*Otahki!* Talk!"

"*Ah!* I will! she eagerly replied. And then: "Chiefs, and you, sacred men, listen: From the time when Otter Woman came here to live with us, I suspected that she was bad, and then I made certain that she was. It was when Handsome Man came dancing to where we sat. I had borrowed her awl, and wanting it, she held out her hand and said to me: 'Give me Handsome Man.' It was him she was thinking about, not her work. It was him she wanted, not our own man, so good and kind to her. Given the opportunity, I knew she would be his sweetheart. So was it that I decided to watch her closely.

"Last evening, as on every evening, she and I went to get water for the night. I forgot that I needed some for myself, and when we were halfway to the creek I remembered and went back for another bucket. Again on my way to the creek, I asked Badger Woman to go with me, and she did. As we were going along we heard talking, saw a movement of some brush near the trail; we went nearer and saw a man and a woman upon the ground. The man saw us, got up and ran away. He was Handsome Man. And then we saw that the other was Otter Woman. I had been right. She was a bad woman. I ran and told our man about it. There. I have told you the truth. That is all."

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623 Another long silence. Broken by White Calf: "Badger Woman, what have you to tell us about this?"

The old woman did not reply, nor look up. She stared at the fireplace, stonily, as though she had not heard the chief. And after a little he said, impatiently: "Come now, you heard me. Talk!"

Then as it became evident that she did not intend to reply, old Red Bird's Tail gave her a vicious nudge and hissed: "Talk, woman! Answer him, if you don't want me to make you cry."

"Don't strike me, you mean old man," she said to him, and then to White Calf, to us all: "Oh, how I hate tale-bearing. Hate it! Hate it! But if you must know: yes, we came upon the two, out there in the timber. But I don't believe that Otter Woman is that Blood man's sweetheart; she appeared to be angry; as though she had been fighting him."

"So I was. I was trying to get out my knife and stab him," Otter Woman cried.

"*Ha!* If he wasn't her sweetheart, if she hated him, why didn't she cry out, shout for help, as any frightened woman would have done?" *Otahki* loudly queried. And I saw that that impressed the chiefs, several of them nodding to one another, and Little Dog exclaiming: "*Ah*, Proof enough that she was there to meet the worthless Handsome Man."

It was then that we heard a commotion in the crowd that had gathered before the lodge; subdued talk and exclamations of surprise; and bounced in and stood glaring at us, Otter Woman's mother. And [606] all there looked up at her as though they could not believe their eyes, their mouths wide open in astonishment; for never before in the history of the tribe had a woman intentionally come into the presence of her son-in-law. It was something that was just not done; son-in-law and mother-in-law used every precaution to avoid even seeing one another at a distance.

Said this one now: "Yes, I know what you all think of me, but I don't care." She ran on and knelt beside her daughter, clasped her in her arms, and continued: "You, Little Dog, I heard what you said. Yes, and I know what you all think. But I am here to tell you that you are wrong; that my daughter has ever despised that Handsome

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Man. You shall not, shall not punish her, mutilate her for something that she has not done!"

With that, she clasped Otter Woman closer to her and sat glaring at drooped over Talks-with-the-Buffalo and at the row of chiefs; and they were mute, not yet having recovered from their astonishment at her presence here.

Bear Head gave a little cough. Whispered to me: "I am going to tell them what we know of this."

"Yes," I sighed, and he began.

"Talks-with-the-Buffalo; chiefs; and you, oh. Sun's men: *Apikuni*, here at my side, and I were not invited to this talk, but we anyhow came, and for a purpose—for the good of our tribe. You remember what happened to us some summers back, when a certain woman, vowing that she was pure, a faithful wife, took part in building our great offering to Sun, Sun's lodge, and afterward proved to have been a bad woman. Because of her lying vow her man died; our war parties were defeated; many of our hunters crippled, some killed in their endeavors to keep their loved ones supplied with food. Well, it is to prevent another such misfortune that *Apikuni* and I are here. My friends, not Otter Woman, but her accuser, that woman there, is the unfaithful wife, the secret sweetheart of that one we call Handsome Man."

As Bear Head finished, he was rigidly pointing to *Otahki*. And suddenly she drooped; shrank back from the edge of her couch and faltered: "Oh, no. No. You lie."

"Oh, yes, you bad one. And know this: *Apikuni* and I are the two who discovered you and Handsome Man hugging one another there on the trail," he replied.

"You saw them doing that? When? Tell us about it," Talks-with-the-Buffalo demanded.

"Oh, no. No," *Otahki* wailed; and drawing her blanket over her head, sank still lower upon her couch and trembled with fear of what was to come.

Bear Head was not five minutes in telling of our discovery of the two in the timber and of *Otahki's* meeting with her lover in camp on the following day. He finished, and Talks-with-the-Buffalo said

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595 837 623 to him: "Bear Head, it was good of you and *Apikuni* to come and tell us all this. But for you we would doubtless have punished the wrong woman. It is terrible, how very bad some women are. Very, very terrible. And there is something more that I want to know about this bad one of mine." And then he roared, "You *Otahki!* Sit up! Remove your blanket!"

"Oh, no. No," she pleaded, then shrieked as he sprang to her, tore off her blanket, and jounced her to a sitting position upon her couch. Returning then to his place, he said to her: "The truth, now, or I will cut out your tongue: As are a man and wife to one another, so were you with that Blood man, out there in the timber?"

Her "Yes" was so low that we barely heard it.

"And then you lied to him; you told him that Otter Woman loved him, wanted to run off with him to his Blood tribe."

Again a faltering, frightened "Yes."

"You didn't care how bad, how mean you were if only you could get Otter Woman into trouble, cause her to be despised by all. Well, we have now six such women in our camp, and you shall be a seventh one."

"Oh, no! No! No! Oh, Talks-with-the-Buffalo, oh, my man, pity me, pity me," she shrieked. And her sister *Paiota* said to him: "She is so young. Oh, only send her off, and let that be the end of it."

837 623 684 "You, *Paiota*, close firmly your mouth," he replied. And then to the row of us: "My friends, little did I think that I would ever be shamed as this woman has shamed me. You agree, do you not, that she should be made to suffer the punishment that our tribe has ever inflicted upon women of her kind?"

"*Ah! Ah! Ah!*" they emphatically replied.

"*Ah.* It is decided. Little Dog, Running Crane, and you, Fast Buffalo Horse, do you three seize her, firmly hold her."

"Oh, no! No! No!" the woman shrieked, springing from her couch and making for the doorway. But the three had her before she could reach it; they drew her back across the lodge and held her before her man; by arms and head firmly held her; and he, pinching her nose with thumb and finger, with one quick stroke of his knife, cut it off, and contemptuously tossed it into the fireplace. By that

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time I was going, and feeling a little sick. I had not wanted to see that cruel cutting, but I did. I got out into the open and saw the crowd that had gathered before the lodge scattering, each his own way and silently.

So was it that *Otahki* became one of that despised little group of cut-nosed women of the tribe—women with whom the good women would not associate; women who were refused the comfort of entering Sun's lodge and making offerings to Those Above. Daily from lodge to lodge they begged for work and food and the privilege of sleeping near the doorway. None liked to look at them, so closely did their faces resemble the face of a human skull.

No wonder that the women of the Blackfoot tribes were, with few exceptions, extremely virtuous!

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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cepting for the sons of the rich—and they were a decided minority—skill in hunting and warfare and courage in the face of danger were the musts for survival. In a word, self-reliance was the aim and basis of training.

And self-reliance was as necessary inside the home as outside it. Not that the Blood lacked affection for their offsprings, or a desire to support them. Many observers have commented most positively on both these traits. But the dependence on the hunt and war for food and gain, the frequent movings from place to place, made the rearing of children a difficult matter. Many stories are told of newborn infants "thrown away," left to die in the bushes, either because they could not be cared for on the march, or because raiders might hear their cries and thus be led to the camping ground, or because a mother had died in childbirth (the lot of the orphan, and even the half-orphan, was, and still is, far from enviable).

It was also considered desirable to limit the number of children. Two years was the standard interval, but the longer the time between siblings, the more parents demonstrated their love for the child previously born. Moreover, abortion carried no stigma. Magic help for this purpose could be easily secured from an authorized female practitioner, and as a special favor, a stop could be put to childbearing altogether. Revealingly, barrenness is never given as a cause for divorce in this competitive society where women are highly prized as property and sex objects, and where marriage is notoriously unstable.

The hunt and war often and for extended periods took the Blood father away from home. And these absences, however necessary, were a continual threat to a child's security. For whether justified or not, and frequently he was justified, a husband was quick to suspect that "the worst" had happened while he was gone.[21] A child often heard his mother accused of adultery, often saw her beaten, and not infrequently deserted. Whatever the ultimate solution of familial disagreement, the child invariably was the sufferer. Even if his parents remained together, he often sought refuge with a nearby relative to avoid further scenes of violence. If they separated and he went with his mother, as he usually did if he was still "young," his sense of belonging might be rudely disturbed again. For often when his mother remarried, she left him with

[21] Among the Blood jealousy was and is obsessional. Many a husband approaching his end threatened to kill his wife, for only if she accompanied him on his final journey would he be sure that he alone would possess her in the next world. The only Blood confined to an insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost.

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

836 But while the faithless wife was thus exposed to punish-
589 ment and obloquy, it was different with the unmarried woman. She was regarded as mistress of her own actions and no shame attached to her for unchastity. Many young women in every village carried on a business of common prostitutes without suffering any loss of standing. On the contrary, they were received everywhere on terms of social equality, and often subsequently became faithful wives.
● 837 A similar immunity from punishment or popular censure was enjoyed by the wife whose lewdness was with the consent of or by the direction of her husband. Such cases were not infrequent, sometimes from a desire for gain, again as a point of hospitality to a favored guest, particularly when the host, as was very common with the Blackfeet, enjoyed a plurality of wives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE YOUNG MAN AS A WARRIOR

701 Usually about the age of sixteen the young man is re-
702 garded as a warrior. He reaches this dignity by no ceremony, but it is tacitly admitted by virute of his strength, hardihood and ability and readiness to meet the foe in
[756] combat. When he first determines to seek the war path, his father usually procures the services of a medicine man, who paints him with mystic devices and mutters over him an invocation for courage, success in war, and a safe return, after which his father presents him with weapons
[729] and if able, a horse, and he is ready for the field. As a
[555] rule, the young men are very ambitious to distinguish themselves in war and seek every opportunity to win the
[883] honor that war-like deeds can alone secure. Not infrequently, however, they are great drones, lounging in the village, participating neither in the war nor the chase until they take wives, when perforce they must exert themselves to live.

AGE OF MARRIAGE

584 About the age of twenty-five the young warrior begins to
[582] think of having a wife. Having selected the woman he
[583] would thus honor, he loses no time in employing the civilized device of a tedious and uncertain courtship, but